

Sunday of Thomas

Sunday, April 26, 2020

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church



SYNAXARION: Nikitas the new martyr; George, Mavuel, Theodore, George, and Michael of Samothraki; Basil the martyr bishop of Amaseia; Stephanos bishop of Perm; Leon bishop of Samos

Entrance Hymn: Bless God in the churches, the Lord from the fountains of Israel. Save us, O Son of God, risen from the dead

Apolytikion: With the tomb sealed securely, O Christ the Life, You rose from the grave, and with the doors tightly closed, You came to Your Apostles, O Resurrection of all, renewing in us a right Spirit through them, according to Your great mercy

Kontakion: Even though You descended into the grave You destroyed the Power of Hades and You rose as a Victor, O Christ our God, saying to the myrrh bearing women: Rejoice! And to Your Apostles granting peace and to the fallen, You also grant Resurrection.

Megalinarion: The angel cried to her who is full of grace: Rejoice Holy Virgin and again I say rejoice, for your Son has risen from the tomb on the third day. Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has arisen over you. Dance now for joy O Zion and exult. Rejoice and be glad O pure Theotokos at the Resurrection of your Child.

Communion Hymn: Receive the Body of Christ and partake ye of Him. He is an Immortal Fountain. Alleluia.

Readings for Sunday of Thomas

Epistle Reading is Acts of the Apostles 5:12-20

In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

Gospel Reading is from John 20:19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe." Eight days later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: George and Toulia Tsaros, Fr. Pat Legato, Nellie Pringle, Robert Calbi, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Tony Ekonomou, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Tina Chakonas, Ann Demas, Alex Martinez, Adriana Martinez, Aaron Martinez, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangeline Xeroteris, Nichole Ross, Daniel Ross, Daniella Ross, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Antonia Caffentzis, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Matthew & Family, Phyllis, John Zelatis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopou-los, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, Effie Sorolis, John Myer, Mike Trimis, Robert and Alice Stoccardo, John Alexander, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Anastasia Smyrnakis, Ekaterina & Anna Shushaalykova, Dora Koudouna, Ana Mourer, Debbie Phelps, Mary Voykin, David Voykin, Anne Sakellaris, Denise Badrane, Sia Blankenship, Don Payne, Zhana Temelkova, Stanislava Terzieva, James, Jude and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

Upcoming Services & Events

****PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THAT THIS SCHEDULE CAN CHANGE AT ANY TIME, BASED ON ANY GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS THAT CHANGE. PLEASE STAY TUNED FOR OUR WEBSITE FOR ANYTHING THAT MAY CHANGE.**

PLEASE STAY INFORMED AT STJOHNTPA.ORG

Sunday, April 26	Thomas Sunday Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Monday, April 27	Meeting of ministry heads 6:30 p.m. via zoom
Tuesday, April 28	Women's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. via zoom Parish Council Meeting 6:30 p.m. via zoom
Wednesday, April 29	Paraklesis Service 6:00 p.m.
Thursday, April 30	Fr. Stavros to present on call-in show on OCN (Orthodox Christian Network)
Sunday, May 3	Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearers Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, May 6	Paraklesis Service 6:00 p.m.
Friday, May 8	St. John the Theologian Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Paraklesis Service of Supplication to be celebrated every Wednesday until the end of the Coronavirus Crisis—There is a service called the Paraklesis Service of Supplication the Virgin Mary which is celebrated during the first 14 days of August, and also in times of sorrow, distress and necessity. During this time of crisis, where people are sick and people are anxious, where life is more in isolation and our community is dispersed, we will offer this service every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m., praying for our community by name, until this crisis is over. On the first Wednesday after we are ALL able to return to church, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Unction on that Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

Please visit our [FLICKR](#) page for photos of Holy Week. Link may be found [HERE](#).

Congratulations to our Graduates!

If you have a student who is graduating, please email all information to the church office by Friday, May 15 so we can include graduates in the June/July issue of *The Messenger*! **Please provide:** Name and Picture of the graduate, the institution graduating from, any degree, in the case of a college graduate, and what college the person plans to attend, in the case of the high school graduate.

Welcoming Ministry—We are thankful to our welcoming ministry for continuing to check in with all the families of our church during this time of crisis. Expect a weekly call from either the pastoral staff or the welcoming ministry for the next few weeks until we get through this time of crisis.

Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks: The Bible Project

April 26-May 2

Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." On the Sunday after Pascha, we celebrate what is called "Thomas Sunday."

This marks the event in the Gospel of John that occurred on the Sunday after Pascha where Thomas was with the other Disciples and Jesus appeared to them. Thomas had not been with the Disciples when Jesus appeared to them on the evening of Pascha and when they told him that had seen the Lord, he would not believe them. When Jesus appeared to the Disciples, He invited Thomas to touch His hands and His side, and to not be faithless by believing. Thomas then exclaimed "My Lord and my God." (John 20:28) Then Jesus asked him if he believed only because he had seen. Many times, we are like Thomas. We have enough faith to show up, but we are riddled with doubt, just like he was. We want to SEE a sign. Jesus tells us that faith is believing even when you can't see something, when you can't know the outcome. Christianity is an act of faith. We have not seen Christ face to face and yet we believe in Him. We have not been to heaven, and yet we desire to work our way there. As the world becomes more cynical and material, as we tend to "worship" things we can see (material things, as an example), the journey of faith becomes harder and harder. This is why, like Thomas, we need to continue to show up, even with our doubts. Thomas didn't know what would happen eight days after Pascha. But he had enough faith to show up and see. And his efforts were indeed rewarded as he saw the Resurrected Christ. This is the end point of our Christian journeys. To see Christ. And it requires faith, and our presence in order to happen.

Catechism Lesson For Adults and Teenagers

Sunday, April 26

Read John 20: 19-31 (Gospel from Thomas Sunday) which may be found on page two of this bulletin.

Discussion questions:

1. Why do you think Thomas wasn't with the rest of the disciples when Jesus appeared to them?
 - A. He was sorting things out
 - B. He thought it was all over
 - C. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time
 - D. Other _____
2. "Unless I see the nail marks in His hands, I will not believe it." What was Thomas saying?
 - A. You guys are crazy
 - B. I need proof.
 - C. I wa!nt to believe, but. . .
 - D. Don't break my heart again
 - E. Other _____
3. What do you think was Jesus' tone with Thomas?
 - A. Harsh
 - B. Tender
 - C. Loving
 - D. Understanding
 - E. Other _____
4. Who does Thomas remind you of in this story?
 - A. A science teacher
 - B. An agnostic
 - C. A person with honest doubts
 - D. A friend of mine
 - E. Myself
 - F. Other _____
5. What is the closest that you have come to going through what Thomas went through?
 - A. When someone close to me died
 - B. When I dropped out of church?
 - C. When I experienced disappointment and took it out on God
 - D. Other _____
6. When you have doubts in your faith, what have you found helpful?
 - A. Going to the Bible
 - B. Talking with my priest
 - C. Sharing with friends
 - D. Going ahead "on faith"
 - E. Spending time alone with God
 - F. Being encouraged by the faith of others
7. How would you describe your spiritual life right now?
 - A. Full of doubt
 - B. Full of faith
 - C. Half and half
 - D. Increasing in faith
 - E. Increasing in doubt
 - F. Other _____
8. What do you think needs to happen in your life for you to feel more alive in your faith?